

Response

A. Introduction

Claims 1 and 3-13 are pending in the application. The Examiner initially rejected (1) claims 1, 4-5, 7, and 12-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over combined disclosures of European Patent Publication No. 0239865 of Hirth (the “Hirth Document”) and U.S. Patent No. 4,670,026 to Hoenig, (2) claims 6 and 8 under Section 103(a) as obvious over combined disclosures of the Hirth Document, the Hoenig patent, and U.S. Patent No. 6,245,299 to Shiloh, et al., and (3) claims 5 and 12-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as indefinite. According to the Examiner, claims 2-3 and 9-11 would be allowable if suitably rewritten.

B. The Claims

Applicants do not concede the propriety of any rejection of the Examiner. Nevertheless, for convenience and to expedite issuance of a patent, they have incorporated features of claim 2 into independent claim 1, cancelled claim 2 to avoid redundancy, and written each of claims 3 and 9 in independent form. Applicants additionally have corrected dependencies of claims 5 and 12-13. Applicants believe these revisions resolve all issues raised by the Examiner and accordingly request that the pending claims be allowed.

Petition for Extension of Time

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), Applicants petition the Commissioner for all extensions of time needed to respond to the Office Action.

Fees

Attached is authorization to charge a credit card for \$460.00 for the petition fee. Applicants believe no other fee presently is due. However, if Applicants' belief is mistaken, the Commissioner is authorized to debit Deposit Account No. 11-0855 for any additional fee due as a consequence of Applicants' submission of this paper.

Conclusion

Applicants request that the Examiner allow claims 1 and 3-13 and that a patent containing these claims issue in due course.

Respectfully submitted,



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